

The Newborn Hearing Screening Project

The Newborn Hearing Screening Project, a part of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health, has been helping West Virginia families since 2000. Our goal is to help identify hearing loss in infants and guide families to the appropriate services. The project is part of the Right From The Start Program.

Why do babies need to have their hearing screened?

- West Virginia law requires that all babies be screened for hearing loss.
- If your baby has hearing loss, it is important to know as soon as possible.
- For every 1,000 babies that are born, between four and six have some degree of hearing loss.
- Your baby's most important learning takes place between birth and three-years-old and hearing loss that is untreated can interfere with their understanding.



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*If you have any questions
or concerns about your
baby's hearing, call your primary
care provider or the
Newborn Hearing Screening Project.*



Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health
Division of Perinatal and
Women's Health/Perinatal Programs
Newborn Hearing Screening Project

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(304) 558-5388 or 1-800-642-8522

Right From The Start Program
www.wvdhhr.org/rfts

Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health
www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh



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How does the screening work?

- It is done while your baby is quiet or asleep and takes about 10 minutes.
- The tests are very safe and will not hurt your baby in any way.
- There are two types of equipment used. Your baby may have one or both of the following:

Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE):

Your baby will hear a series of clicks through a small ear plug and a computer measures the echoes that return from the ear.

Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR):

Your baby will hear a series of clicks through small headphones and the screener measures your baby's response to the sounds.

- You will get the results before you leave the hospital.

What will happen during the screening?

- Trained hospital staff will test your baby's hearing.
- Hospital staff will give you the results or tell you if more tests are needed.
- If your baby needs more testing, schedule it as soon as possible.

What is hearing loss?

Hearing loss can be inherited or can be caused by conditions during pregnancy or once the baby is born. Many types of hearing loss can be corrected by medicine or surgery. However, some types of losses can be permanent, which means your child will need special help.

What if my baby has permanent hearing loss?

If your baby has permanent hearing loss, we can help. The Newborn Hearing Screening Project can find the help you and your baby will need. From hearing aids to speech and language therapy, there are many ways to handle hearing problems. We will also get you referrals to doctors and other services who can help.



Your Baby's Stages of Hearing

0-3 months	Startles to a sudden loud sound Soothes or calms to your voice Makes sounds like "ohh" and "ahh"
3-6 months	Turns head or moves eyes to find a familiar voice Makes noises and sounds like "baba," "mama" or "gaga" Uses many sounds, squeals and chuckles
6-10 months	Begins to understand common words like "no" and "bye-bye" Responds to his/her name
10-15 months	Repeats simple words and sounds that you make Points or reaches for familiar objects Correctly uses "mama" or "dada" Responds to singing or music
18 months	Follows simple, spoken directions Regularly uses several clear words
24 months	Understands you when you call from another room Points to body parts when asked Begins to speak in two-word combinations like "Mommy more!"